



# Project Charter

# DSP Housing Options

Disability Support Program

May 2026



# Project Background and Objective

## Background

- DSP participants are currently supported through multiple housing arrangements, including unlicensed community-based options, licensed community homes, residential care facilities, and adult residential/regional rehabilitation centres.
- DSP is actively transitioning away from several facility-based models. Admissions have ceased for Residential Care Facilities and Adult Residential/Regional Rehabilitation Centres (effective Jan 1, 2025), and for Group Homes and Developmental Residences (effective Jan 1, 2026).
- Currently, DSP funds and licenses over 300 Small Options Homes (SOH) across the province for persons with disabilities. In most cases, SOHs are owned by Service Providers who provide both housing and disability-related supports; as a result, occupancy can be tied to the service relationship. This means that **if/when a provider withdraws service, participants may be left without housing and without the same protections afforded under the tenancy act.**
- While SOHs conform to the Remedy's requirement of housing a maximum of 4 participants, in the future, the Remedy requires "diverse housing options not [solely] reliant on the Small Option Home (SOH) model" (*Remedy*, p. 22). Accordingly, this project will clarify SOH's role within the future DSP housing continuum and identify additional housing options that align with the Remedy.



## Objective

Research, and develop the housing & tenancy options for the desired future state for DSP participants with the goal of identifying options that inform future considerations. Use the desired future state to inform policy and program decisions related to housing.

# Proposed Approach

## Phase 1: Future State Housing Continuum

**Objective: Identify what should the future of DSP Housing look like?**

- Current state review of DSP housing models (e.g., housing arrangements, relationship to supports, participant rights, choice, equity, stability)
- Jurisdictional scan and literature review of innovative and person-centered housing models
- Engage with Department of Growth and Development on tenancy and ownership models
- Targeted engagements to validate and test emerging ideas
- Options analysis of alternative tenancy and ownership models
- Analysis and consideration of a secondary suite incentive program
- **Recommendations for future housing options/continuum**



## Phase 2A – Response to Recent Home Purchases

**Objective: Determine approach to address unsanctioned home purchases**

- Assess recent home purchases completed outside established processes against Future State principles
- Develop time-bound recommendations
- Develop implementation plan



## Phase 2B – Future Considerations

**Objective: Identify areas requiring future analysis or separate initiatives**

- High-level identification of potential impacts to other DSP housing and support models
- Identifying areas that require:
  - Policy or legislative change
  - Safeguards, licensing change
  - High level implementation plan

# Project Scope

## ✓ In Scope

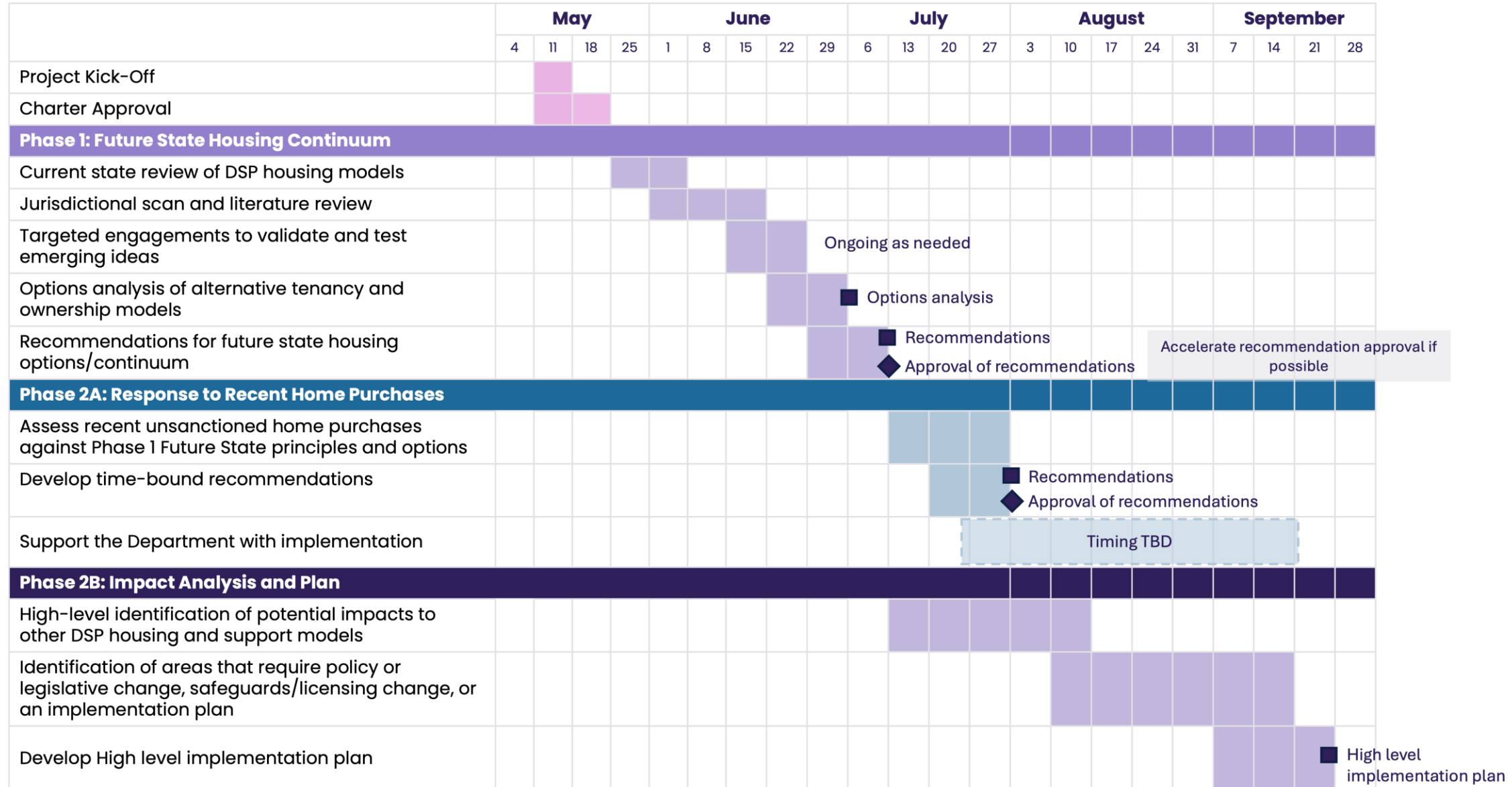
- ✓ **Current state review** of the SOH model in Nova Scotia, including housing arrangements, the relationship between housing and disability supports, participant rights and protections, and key challenges related to choice, equity, and stability.
- ✓ **Engage with Department of Growth and Development**, who will contribute specialized expertise on housing tenancy and ownership models to inform the options analysis.
- ✓ **Jurisdictional scan and literature review** of innovative and person-centered housing models for people with disabilities, examining alternative tenancy and ownership approaches and the associated opportunities, risks, and constraints.
- ✓ **Targeted engagement** that draws on perspectives from relevant stakeholders to validate findings, test emerging ideas, and inform the development and assessment of options.
- ✓ **Options analysis and Recommendations** which involves identifying potential alternative tenancy and ownership models for DSP participants, detailing participant rights and protections under these models, and recommending which option(s) to pursue based on program direction and develop high level implementation plans.

## ✗ Out of Scope

- ✗ **Implementation of new models or changes to existing programs**
- ✗ **Changes to legislation, regulation, or formal policy** that could be required to formally adopt or implement new tenancy or ownership models.
- ✗ **Implementing safeguards or changes to licensing or OFM frameworks**
- ✗ **Individual participant housing decisions** or case-level placement planning.
- ✗ **Operational changes to existing Small Option Homes** including policy on filling SOH vacancies
- ✗ **Housing stock availability** may be discussed as context but not analyzed or solved within scope

# Project Approach

This schedule is a high-level overview of the phased approach for the DSP Housing Options Project (dates subject to change):



# Project Resources

- **Maria Medioli, Project Sponsor**
  - Provide final approval and determinations for deliverables and direction
  - Escalate and present items to OSD Executive as required
- **Nicole Hazelhurst, Acting Project Director**
  - Escalate and present items to DSP Management and Executive as required
  - Review and approve deliverables prior to submission
- **Adam Fraser, DSP Lead**
  - Provide direction and oversight in alignment with the program and Regional Hubs
  - Work with the Davis Pier project team and Project Manager to support the project’s overall direction and success
- **Charlotte MacDonald, Coordinator of Community Supports DSP**
  - Provide input on community support needs and considerations to support option feasibility and implementation
- **Lisa Burton, Program Coordinator, Opportunities and Social Development**
  - Provide program-level guidance and alignment with OSD priorities to support option feasibility and implementation
- **Nduka Ahilaka, Community Living Facilitator**
  - Work with the Davis Pier project team alongside the DSP Lead to support the project’s overall direction and success
- **Obbia Barni, Project Manager**
  - Provide direction and oversight and maintain understanding of project interrelations with other work streams
  - Review and approve project deliverables and conduct risk escalation, if needed
- **Alice McVittie & Alec Brooks, Davis Pier Project Team**
  - Lead in the development of project deliverables
  - Maintain regular communications with the Project Manager (e.g., status meetings and reports)

## Interested Parties and Impacted Groups

Internal

- DSP Program Coordinators
- DSP Service Delivery Staff
- DSP Leadership
- DSP Licensing
- DSP Finance
- Regional Closure Team
- Regional Hubs

External

- Department of Growth and Development
- Service Providers who own/operate housing
- DSP Participants/Support Networks (via Regional Advisory Council)
- DSP Participants enrolled in external housing cooperatives or innovative models (e.g. co-ops, Family Demonstration Model, etc)
- Inclusion Nova Scotia

## Subject Matter Expert

### Thomas Saunders, Housing SME (Department of Growth and Development)

- Provide specialized expertise on housing tenancy and ownership models
- Support option development and assessment from a housing systems perspective

# Next Steps

Next Steps	Date
Seek approval of Project Charter	Week of May 25
Begin Current State Review	Ongoing
Schedule and Host Project Kick Off	Week of June 8
Engage with Growth and Development SME	Week of June 8